

# OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### 2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

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#### COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

##### **Social Sciences and History Selected Highlights 2020-21**

- Host, Constitution Day Lecture, "The Newburgh Conspiracy and the Road to the Constitution," Dr. David Head, University of Central Florida, September 17, 2020
- Andrew Wegmann, French Connections, an edited collection by LSU Press, November 2020  
<https://lsupress.org/books/detail/french-connections/>
- French Connections is a finalist for the Wilson Book Prize in Canadian history  
<https://wilson.humanities.mcmaster.ca/2021/03/05/2020-wilson-prize-finalists/>
- Leslie Stewart served as President of the Mississippi Political Science Association this year and hosted the MPSA's annual meeting on behalf of DSU.
- Host, Sammy O. Cranford Memorial History Lecture, Dr. Julia Garfield, "Jean-Jacques Dessalines and the Haitian Revolution," April 8, 2021
- Junior History major Isabella Escobedo was named the Jack Winton Gunn Award recipient for 2020-21.

##### **DMI Selected Highlights 2020-2021**

- DMI bands performed at Statesmen Kickback, Juke Joint Festival, GRAMMY Museum MS Live on the Lawn/MTV Turns 40 Weekend, and the Delta Soul Charity Golf Tournament.
- Hosted Rock Hall of Famer and guitarist Roger Fisher's latest recording project in DMI Studio A.
- Provided live sound production for 3 stages and 20 performers at Juke Joint Festival in Clarksdale.
- Implemented a weeklong, after-school, virtual Entertainment Industry Studies camp with over 20 high school students in attendance.
- Provided a monthly interactive online lecture series with prominent entertainment industry professionals.
- Hosted the recording of Steve Azar's "My Mississippi Reunion" album in DMI Studio A.

## **Languages and Literature Selected Highlights 2020-21**

- Our new B.A. curriculum was successfully implemented in the fall of 2020. This important work was the result of two years effort by the curriculum committee and resulted in a program designed to both expand our range of offerings and deepen student engagement with English-language literatures and world literatures in translation.
- Dr. Melanie Anderson's book, *Shirley Jackson and Domesticity: Beyond the Haunted House*, an essay collection co-edited with Dr. Jill E. Anderson, appeared last summer from Bloomsbury Academic. Also, Melanie Anderson's book, *Monster, She Wrote: The Women who Pioneered Horror and Speculative Fiction* (co-authored with Lisa Kroger, 2019) won the 2019 Bram Stoker Award for Superior Achievement in Nonfiction and the 2020 Locus Award for Nonfiction.
- Professor Maia Elgin Wegmann and creative writing student, K'Na Rose, were selected William Winter Scholars at the 2021 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.

## **DSU BSW Selected Program Highlights 2020-2021**

- Successfully implemented the first cohort in the new Child Advocacy Studies Certificate Program
- Successfully implemented the Statesman's Shelf Food Pantry in partnership with the Office of Student Affairs despite the challenges of the pandemic
- Initiated development of the new Delta Children's Advocacy Center
- Offered the first "virtual" Margaret Tullos Field Symposium and virtual Field Instructor Training program
- Presented our research on the COPD Simulation at the virtual Baccalaureate Program Director's Association Conference
- Provided six Continuing Education programs for local social work practitioners
- Presented on our social justice activities at the Winning the Race Conference where two senior BSW students won second place for their research poster on Social Work Justice and Advocacy
- Collaborated with the Social Justice Club and Social Work Club to provide a service project on voter registration
- Offered the Virtual Dementia Tour to students and local caregivers
- Provided feedback and leadership to the Online Synchronous Task Force in the development of student guidelines for OS classes
- Conducted services projects for Operation Christmas Child and Suitcases for Foster Children

### **Speech & Hearing Selected Highlight 2020-2021**

- Our students managed to perform 50+ hearing tests this past semester on DSU students and community members.

### **Art Selected Highlight 2020-2021**

- Four art faculty members, Robyn Wall, Jesse Brown, Nathan Pietrykowski and Will Jacks and one alumnus, Lawson King, were selected to showcase their work this fall at the MS Invitational exhibition at the Mississippi Museum of Art.

### **Math & Sciences Selected Highlights 2020-2021**

- In Chemistry, Dr. Joseph Bentley was selected as the S.E. Kossman Outstanding Teacher.
- In Biology, Dr. Nina Baghai-Riding published 10 abstracts, 1 book review, and submitted two peer reviewed manuscripts in collaboration with our new science education professor Dr. Larry Collins.
- In Math, Dr. Lee Virden and Dr. Liza Bondurant, mathematics faculty, and Rebecca Hudson, a mathematics education alum, published a gender pay gap lesson in the book entitled "Middle School Mathematics Lessons to Explore, Understand, and Respond to Social Injustice." This book will be published by Corwin and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- Dr. Liza Bondurant also published two book chapters, four peer reviewed journal articles, and presented five oral presentations.
- Dr. Catherine Putnam and Mathematics hosted the 2021 Louisiana – Mississippi Section of the Mathematics Association of America virtual section meetings in February and March.
- Mathematics was selected to host the first Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) Lecture Series to be Held in Spring 2023.
- The division had 3 chemistry graduates who were accepted into graduate programs – Nathan Barnett, PhD Chemistry program at Auburn University, Grant Foley, PhD Chemistry program, Univ. of MS, and Allison Fullilove, MS in Chemistry, Vanderbilt. Several biology graduates and alumni were accepted into professional schools: accepted into medical school, Sydney Franks, University of Mississippi Medical School (she is also a rural physician scholar) and alumni, Aman Syed Mohammad and Matthew Majeur, William Carey School of Osteopathic Medicine programs. In the Allied Health disciplines, alum Mason Francis was accepted into Mississippi College's Physician Assistant program, alum, alumna Emily Baker was accepted into Nova Southeastern University Doctoral of Physical Therapy program, and lastly for the BAS-GAI program, spring graduate, Warren Rybzinski, accepted a position with Delta Electric.

### **Department of Music Selected Highlights 2020-2021**

- Dr. Josh Armstrong presented at the National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy, and was a virtual guest presenter at The University of Coastal Carolina, University of Manitoba (Canada), Texas Tech University.

- Dr. Megan Bailey published an article, *Keeping the 'Fun' in Fundamental Practice During a Pandemic*, in the International Trumpet Guild Journal, performed with the Lone Star Wind Orchestra, performed in the world premiere of opera “Our Trudy” (music by Anna Pidgorna, libretto by Maria Reva) at Ad Astra Music Festival in Russell, KS in June 2021, recorded a newly commissioned work with DFW Brass for music publishing house Hal Leonard, participated in a consortium of trumpet professors worldwide to commission a new trumpet sonatina by Anthony Plog, and presented master classes for trumpet students at UT-Arlington and Midwestern State University.
- Dr. Shelley Collins gave the Fall 2020 DSU commencement address as winner of the Kossman Outstanding Faculty Award, performed a faculty recital at DSU with Dr. Kumiko Shimizu, and presented virtual masterclasses at Henderson State University, Mississippi State University, and University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. The Flute Studio virtually hosted five guest artists for masterclasses and workshops, including a class with a flutist from The President's Own Marine Band.
- Dr. Jamie Dahman was named Auditions Chair for the Mississippi Chapter in the Southern Region of NATS.
- Dr. Karen Fosheim contributed to a virtual educational program on the blues for the docent program of the San Diego Symphony Young People’s Concerts, and Classics 4 Kids Concerts, and began serving as VP for pre-college competitions for Mississippi Music Teachers Association.
- Dr. Douglas Mark published two audio reviews: *Jacques Hétu: Concertos* in the *International Trombone Association Journal* and a review of *Eternal Gratitude: A Review* in the *Online Trombone Journal*. Dr. Mark performed on the Mississippi Music Teachers Association Virtual Performance Series and in “Sliding Santas” E-Holiday Card Virtual Caroling Performance with the Tishimingo Arts Council. He commissioned and received a new work for trombone/violin, *Child’s Play* by Paul Osterfield. He presented Virtual Master Class at Mississippi State University, served as an ENKOR International Solo Competition Judge, served as Secretary-Treasurer & Design Team for Online College Music Society Southern Chapter Conference, and hosted virtual Master Classes for guest artists Justin Weis, low brass clinician, and Dr. Richard Human, Prof. of Low Brass, Mississippi State University.
- Dr. Bret Pimentel was promoted to Professor of Music.
- Dr. Erik Richards completed a book chapter on the performance and theoretic analysis of a new band work, *Curtains in the Sky* for inclusion in *Teaching Music through Performance in Band, Volume 12*, a widely-read resource guide for wind band conductors.
- Dr. Kumiko Shimizu co-presented a virtual workshop for the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing's *Songs for All Voices: East Asian Song*, participated in the National Opera Association Pianists-Conductors Committee’s presentation during the National Opera Association Virtual Conference, gave a presentation on Japanese Folk Songs for DSU music majors, and hosted guest artist Ann Balz’s virtual presentation *Performance Techniques*.
- Dr. Jung-Won Shin was promoted to Professor of Music. She performed at two concerts of the New Music on the Bayou summer music festival, Monroe, Louisiana, June 3-5, 2021, presented a faculty collaborative recital with Anne-Gaëlle Ravetto, violin, assumed the position of President-Elect of the Mississippi Music Teachers Association, and organized the virtual Art of the Piano and virtual online lessons for domestic/international high school students during Spring 2021.
- Dr. Julia Thorn was awarded Tenure and Promoted to Associate Professor of Music.

- A performance of Drs. Jamie Dahman and Kumiko Shimizu was included in *Fulbright at 75: Bulgarian-American Visions and Voices* organized by the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange (Bulgarian Fulbright Commission).
- Dr. Shelley Collins, Dr. Jamie Dahman, and Dr. Jung-Won Shin were recognized as a nominees for the 2020 DSU Student Engagement Educator Award.
- *The Art of the Piano* was held virtually during spring 2021 with 41 student participants from the US and South Korea. DSU piano faculty Drs. Jung-Won Shin, Kumiko Shimizu, and Karen Fosheim provided written comments, masterclasses, and online lessons for participants.
- The DSU Chorale and Chamber Singers, under the direction of Dr. Julia Thorn, presented a Virtual Christmas Concert and a Spring Concert that was performed live and broadcast to a wider audience.
- The DSU Wind Ensemble and Concert Band, led by Drs. Erik Richards and Josh Armstrong, performed a concert on the green space in downtown Cleveland as part of the Crosstie Arts Festival.
- Student singers and pianists, led by Dr. Kumiko Shimizu, collaborated to perform in an Opera Scenes Program in April 2021.
- Students placed in competitions: Yeim Kim earned First Place in Junior/Senior Solo Piano Division and Cameron Sullivan received Second Place in the Freshman/Sophomore Solo Piano Division at the Mississippi Music Teachers Association Collegiate Competitions in Spring 2021.
- Student Yeim Kim earned the Alternate (second place) award from the Young Artist Piano Division of the state round of the Music Teacher National Competitions during Fall 2020.
- 10 music majors named to the President's List, 8 named to the Dean's List for fall 2020.

### **COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND AVIATION**

- Obtained reaffirmation of the Bachelor of Commercial Aviation (BCA) degree with the Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI).
- Completed construction of the state-of-the-art Financial Investing & Research Lab. Classes will be offered in the Lab beginning Fall 2021.
- Awarded \$240,000 USDA grant to begin operations of the Business Assistance Center (BAC) in September 2020.
- Partnered with Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) and Volunteer Mississippi to return America Reads – Mississippi (ARM), an AmeriCorps program, that provides tutors for grades K-3 in elementary schools.
- Awarded a \$1,050,000, 2.5 year grant from the Kellogg Foundation to establish the Minority Women Business Center (MWBC).

- The Air Force JRROTC Flight Program: The United States Air force granted the Department of Commercial Aviation permission to teach their top cadets our Private Pilot course with each student receiving their Private Pilot Certificate.
- Awarded FAA grant along with Mississippi State University to study pilot reaction to close encounters with drone activity beginning Summer 2021.
- Reaffirmation for FAA 141 certificate completed.
- Airline partnerships with Endeavor, Alaska, and Envoy established.
- Awarded 20 FedEx Purple Runway scholarships at 5000 dollars each to students who will use that money to go toward their certified flight instructors' certificates.
- Delivered and FAA approved two new simulators to be used starting Fall 2021.
- Introduced new state of the art Private Pilot ground school syllabus which will allow us to teach online if we expand our program to future satellite compasses/airports and or need to teach strictly online.
- Introduced our new and recently FAA approved next generation scheduling, training syllabus, and progress reports software. ( FLIGHT Schedule PRO)
- Dr. Chris Riley received Tenure and Promotion.
- Dr. Cameron Montgomery was nominated for the Emerald Award of Excellence.
- Dr. Melody Fortune has been elected as an inaugural member of the American College of Healthcare Executives Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
- Dr. Tomeka Harbin was selected as Delta State University's nominee for the IHL Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award

## **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES**

### **New Programming**

Two new Specialist programs will begin fall 2021, the Educational Specialist in Curriculum and Instruction and the Educational Specialist in Higher Education.

### **Accreditation**

The Counselor Education Program received full 8-year accreditation for its programs from the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

In February 2021, the Hamilton-White Child Development Center received full accreditation through 2026 from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

All educator preparation programs were fully recognized by the Mississippi Department of Education through 2027.

### **Funding for Special Programming**

The Tri State Foundation awarded \$180,000 in funding to provide tuition scholarships for 20 candidates to pursue advanced degrees in educator and leadership preparation programs.

The Delta Sunflower Project, a partnership with the Sunflower Consolidated School District and funded through the Kellogg Foundation, completed its second year. This project included a total of \$399,996 in funding for the tuition of 22 residents across the first two cohorts. Three residents graduated in Spring 2021, and eight are expected to graduate in the next academic year. This means 11 new licensed teachers in the Sunflower Consolidated School District.

### **Special Recognition**

Nicole Spinks and Dr. Jacqueline Goldman won top honors for their use of technology in teaching their classes, each receiving the DSU Student Engagement Educator Award.

The DSU Delta Sigma Upsilon chapter of Chi Sigma Iota was awarded the 2021 Chi Sigma Iota Outstanding Chapter Award.

Dr. Todd Davis received the Georgene Clark Diversity Champion Award.

### **Special Events**

The Counselor Education Division held the 39<sup>th</sup> Virtual F.E. Woodall Conference with 222 attendees participating in 27 breakout sessions on a wide variety of multicultural topics in the mental health field. The event was coordinated by Ms. Chaley Brunetti, Counselor Education Lab Director.

OkraCamp, coordinated by Dr. Todd Davis, was delivered as an afterschool and Saturday program in the spring of 2021 to 60 campers, with parents participating in a special session. Camp activities included archery, paddle boarding, kayaking, canoeing, shooting BB guns, soccer, flag football, dodgeball, and floor hockey.

### **Accomplishments for Clinical Experiences, Licensure, and Accountability**

In the 2020-21 academic year, the Office of Clinical Experiences, Licensure, and Accountability had one of the largest groups of student interns on record. There was a total of 102 undergraduate elementary and secondary interns, and 53 Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) interns. All 102 undergraduate interns received their bachelor's degree. Of the 53 MAT interns, 15 received their master's degree in spring 2021; approximately 30 are projected to earn their master's degree by the end of summer 2021.

## **ROBERT E. SMITH SCHOOL OF NURSING**

- 2020 NCLEX-RN pass rate – 97% (overall)  
2021 FNP Certification pass rate – 100% (first write)
- U.S. News 2021 Best Online Program for Master's in Nursing Program
- 2020 Ranked #3 for RNBSN program in MS
- 2020 Best RNBSN program
- 2020 recognized nationally as Most Affordable DNP program
- Received external grant funds (\$14,400) to partner with local hospital, Bolivar Medical Center, to develop a competency training program for healthcare providers in our simulation lab
- SON faculty member, Teresa Haynes, one of ten accepted into the 2021 Community Engagement Research Institute at the University of Southern Mississippi in June

- SON faculty member, Stephanie Hodnett, passed national certification as an Emergency Nurse Practitioner (ENP)
- SON staff member, Holly Haney, had a poem published in the Journal of Pediatric Surgical Nursing titled *For All the Young Nurses*
- SON faculty and students assisted in administering approximately 3200 vaccinations at the Bolivar County Vaccination site on the DSU campus during February, March, and April

### **ROBERTS-LAFORGE LIBRARY**

- Based on annual Institutional Research surveys, over 90% of students and faculty selected being either very satisfied or satisfied with library staff over the past three years on average.
- Roberts-LaForge Library sponsored the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Academic Research Showcase in a virtual format with Dr. Todd Davis serving as moderator.
- Archival film footage, programs, photographs, and the assistance of University Archivist Emily Jones provided the foundation for the recently released documentary *The Queen of Basketball*. The production focusing on the career of Lucy Harris held its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival.

### **GRADUATE AND CONTINUING STUDIES**

#### **Activities and Achievements:**

##### Admissions/Recruiting:

20-21:

-Fall 2020 Graduate enrollment increased, measured against Fall 2019 (+3.89)

-Spring 2021 (increase, measured against Spring 2020 (+8.59%))

##### Continuing Education:

20-21: in Spring 2021, hosted a virtual regional Science Fair and hosted the statewide fair virtually.

##### TFA Fellows

20-21: now finishing the second year of a continuation grant, we have been able to start a small Cohort 5, which will complete in Spring 2022. We have applied for approximately \$600K to continue with Cohorts 6 and 7; we should hear back on this application sometime in June or July 2021.

##### IE: Accreditation and Assessment Activities:

We mailed the requested Referral document on March 15, 2021. Will hear in summer.

Other reports filed on time:

SACSCOC: Financial Profile and Indicators (submitted July 2020)

Profile for General and Enrollment Information (January 2021)

##### Grants and Contracts Office

20-21: FY21 (as of June 7) \$4,076,787 (+2%). With CARES/HEERF \$16,010,206 (+369%).



## **STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER**

Established in Fall 2012, the Student Success Center helps students successfully navigate from classroom to cap and gown by offering a wide range of student support services tailored to meet the needs of DSU students. During the 2020-2021 academic year, major accomplishments included:

### **Academic Advising Services:**

- Re-branded meta-majors to academic pathways to help guide undecided students to choose a major.
- Enrolled 38 new C2C students in 2020-21, with 25 students graduating via C2C during 2020-2021 academic year.
- Darla Poole, Coordinator of Academic Advising Services, presented at two virtual conferences, including one with DSU's international partner institution, Perm University.

### **Academic Support Services:**

- Redesigned Academic Support Lab (CED 098/099), an academic readiness class for students with two or more deficient scores on the ACT, to hybrid format. Students met for class one day per week and were required to meet with the Coordinator for weekly academic coaching sessions.
- Acquired outside funding through the Woodward Hines Foundation and a subscription to tutor.com was established. Tutor.com is embedded into students' Canvas shells and offers free, 24/7 online tutoring support in a variety of subjects including drop-off writing services to improve students' writing quality for all classes which require writing components.
- Implemented Student Navigators Program. The pandemic caused a disconnect and less student interaction. Because of social distancing, students reported they are hesitant to reach out/ask for help. As an effective way to check on students, the Student Navigators program was established. The Navigators utilize peer-to-peer interaction through virtual check-ins via phone/email/social media. These check-ins include asking how the semester is going, issues/ challenges, and any concerns the students have during these unprecedented times.

### **First Year Seminar:**

- Taught 416 first-year freshman and transfer students in FYS 100/103/300, in a 100% Hybrid format.
- Trained 19 FYS instructors in hybrid course design and delivery.
- Utilized FYS as perfect course for early alert, with correlation of  $r = .6$  between FYS grade and overall term GPA.

### **International Education/Fulbright Office:**

- Selected as one of nine new Japan Outreach Initiative (JOI) host sites by the Laurasian Institute for a fully funded Japanese cultural educator for 2020-2022. (Delayed by COVID).
- Assisted four students in applying for highly competitive Frederick Douglass Global Fellowship. While no DSU students were selected, but all four received Frederick Douglass Summer Scholar scholarship offers.
- Participated in six virtual recruiting events with EducationUSA and U.S. Dept. of Commerce (South Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Andes, Middle East and North Africa, Taiwan, and Central America).
- DSU faculty and staff participated in virtual conferences with partner institutions, Perm State University, John Paull II Catholic University of Lublin, and UniEVANGELICA, and recruiting with EducationUSA.
- Michelle Johansen, Coordinator of International Education, elected Secretary/Treasurer for MS Association of International Educators/StudyMS.

**International Student Services:**

- Supported DSU's F1 international students during COVID-19 through consistent communication, updating DSU-issued travel documents (I-20), and monitoring SEVP/ICE COVID19-related government policy changes/updates.
- Selected as continuing partner with UGRAD exchange program and entered into new partnership with *Year of Exchange in America for Russians (YEAR)*.

**FORD CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The Indo-American Chamber of Commerce invited me to present on an esteemed panel with Vice Chancellor Suhas Pednekar of University of Mumbai, Pro Chancellor Vidya Yeravdekar of Symbiosis International University, Charles & Enid Schneider Faculty Chair Vittal Prabhu of Penn State University, Chief Executive Officer Gopal Shukla of IITBombay-Washington University in St. Louis, and Center Head & Senior Advisor Janet Turner of EducationUSA. The title of the panel discussion was, "Online Education, The New Normal: Cross Learnings, Future Trends, Collaborations." The event took place on June 11, 2021.

**INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, EFFECTIVENESS AND PLANNING****Kara B. Goldman, Research Analyst**

- Completed Masters in Liberal Arts
- Attended the 2020 SACSCOC Virtual Conference
- Attended the 2021 MAIR Virtual Conference
- Okra Out, LGBTQ+ Committee Co-Leader
- Winning the Race Conference Committee Member
- Secured Funding to Send COVID-19 Care Packages to Delta State's Veteran and Active Military Students
- Delta State University Staff Council Member
- Council of Institutional Research Officers (CIRO) Member

**FaDerricka Harvey, Research and Information Assistant**

- Council of Institutional Research Officers (CIRO) Member
- Delta State University Staff Council Member
- Completed the Introduction to Grant Writing and Grant Implementation Course
- Attended the 2020 SACSCOC Virtual Conference
- Attended 2021 MAIR Virtual Conference

**Chrisa Mansell, Director of IREP**

- Served as Treasurer and Webmaster for the Mississippi Association of Institutional Research (MAIR)
- Served as DSU's Functional Representative on the Mississippi Banner Users Group (MBUG) Board of Directors
- Continued to be DSU's Keyholder for Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)
- Delta State University Staff Council Member
- Delta State University Banner Power Users Group member
- Council of Institutional Research Officers (CIRO) Member

- Association of Institutional Research (AIR) Member
- Attended and helped coordinate the 2021 MAIR Virtual Conference
- Attended the 2020 SACSCOC Virtual Conference

## **DELTA CENTER FOR CULTURE AND LEARNING**

### MS Delta National Heritage Area

- The MS Delta National Heritage Area, a cultural heritage development partnership with the National Park Service that is managed by The Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State, has generated nearly \$4 million in direct federal and state grants to the university since 2010.
- In response to COVID-19, the MS Delta National Heritage Area launched its online [Civil Rights Heritage Archive](#) in spring 2021 as an educational resource for MS Delta residents, students, researchers, and visitors.
- As a result, the National Park Service announced in June 2021 that [the MS Delta National Heritage Area, has been selected for the National Park Service's African American Civil Rights Network](#).
- **The MDNHA is the first of 55 Congressionally designated National Heritage Areas to be added to the African American Civil Rights Network**, which points to key Civil Rights heritage development opportunities for the Mississippi Delta region in tourism, education, and interpretation.

### International Delta Blues Project

- The Delta Center's "Spirit of the Blues: Celebrating Roots of Delta Music Through Spirituals and Gospel" initiative is supported by a grant from National Park Service's Lower MS Delta Initiative, which has connected Delta State's International Conference on the Blues with MS Valley State University's BB King Day Symposium since 2018.
- **The National Park Service has selected the Spirit of the Blues project as a Lower MS Delta Initiative success story** to be featured on their new website being developed by the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at Indiana University.
- In response to COVID-19, [Delta State's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on the Blues gave a virtual presentation in partnership with MS Delta Blues Festival Brazil Online](#), a global festival that included performances from Holland, Australia, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Brazil. The presentation featured opening remarks from President LaForge and a Blues and Gospel performance from Delta State/DMI/College of Business alum Keith "Prince of the Delta Blues" Johnson, great nephew of Blues legend Muddy Waters. Portions of MS Valley State University's virtual BB King Day Symposium were included in the online presentation.

### National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Most Southern Place on Earth workshops

- [The Most Southern workshop has been funded for an 11<sup>th</sup> year](#) (postponed until summer 2022 due to COVID-19). Over the 11-year period, the workshop has brought approximately \$2 million in NEH grant funds to Delta State.

- Based on expertise in administering this impactful experiential learning program, **The Delta Center has been invited by the National Humanities Alliance (NEH advocacy organization) to participate in an upcoming Congressional briefing in Washington DC focused on K-12 education.**

### **REGISTRAR'S OFFICE**

This year was mainly about trying to keep things going given all the additional work due to COVID-19. The Registrar's Office accomplishments were:

- Getting approval and funds for Degree Works to be purchased and implemented
- Revising all Registrar's Office forms and our processes to enable remote processing of all forms
- Cross-training all employees on various office procedures so we ensure continuity of service in case someone is out or a position is open